DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 303 613 CE 051 845

AUTHOR Hanson, Bob; Petty, Gregory
TITLE Youth Leadership Development for Industrial Arts: An Ethnographic Study.
PUB DATE 6 Dec 88
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the American Vocational Association Convention (St. Louis, MO, December 6, 1988).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Ethnography; *Industrial Arts; Junior High Schools; *Leadership Training; Middle Schools; *Outcomes of Education; Program Effectiveness; *Resident Camp Programs; *Student Characteristics; *Student Leadership; Student Organizations

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to review the summer experiences of industrial arts students who participated in Tennessee's Summer Youth Development Program at Camp Clements State Park and the affective behavior changes that took place as a result of the students' summer experience. The study used an ethnographic research design to examine the culture of the middle school industrial arts classroom before, during, and after the summer youth leadership development experience. The school selected was a Knoxville, Tennessee, middle school close to the researchers, with an industrial arts program having an aggregate of students from low to middle socioeconomic status and a racial mix representative of the geographic area. The researchers observed in the classroom before and after the summer camp experience, with particular attention to five factors: ambition; self-control; organization; enthusiasm; and conscientiousness. Three students were singled out for particular observation. Results of the study showed that the students who participated in the camp, although leaders before the summer, exhibited growth in all five factors. They took a more active role in the classroom and assumed responsibility without direction of the teacher. It was noted, however, that the behavior may also have been influenced by teacher expectations. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED303613

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL ARTS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Presented by

Bob Hanson

Gregory Petty

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

December 6, 1988
St. Louis, Missouri
American Vocational Association

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

B Hanson

G Petty

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Technological and Adult Education
402 Claxton Addition
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996-3400
(615)9742574

CE 051 845

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

FOR INDUSTRIAL ARTS:

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Public schools are increasingly asked to serve as the medium for developing character in young people in the United States. This task is one that is easily asked but difficult to accomplish. Some suggest that ordinary classroom experiences lend very little to character development. However, the positive experiences from youth development projects do appear to effect the affective behavior of students who participate. Unfortunately little evidence exists to support these experiences and its affect of students affective behavioral characteristics.

In accordance with federal vocational guidelines each state must conduct leadership development activities for vocational students. Industrial arts programs are not exempt from this requirement if they receive federal monies. However it is the goal of industrial educators to make this experience a rewarding one not just an exercise in federal compliance.

One of the most effective programs for the growth and development of young people is summer camp. Each summer parents across the nation ship their children to a variety of summer camps. In Tennessee however a different kind of summer experience combines the best of growth and development opportunities with those federal compliance issues that are sometimes difficult to document. This presentation outlines

that experience and the outcomes, and reports the findings of an ethnographic study of some of the summer program participants.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to review the unique summer experiences of industrial arts students that participated in Tennessee's Summer Youth Development Program at Camp Clements state park and to report the results of an ethnographic study of some of the participants. This ethnographic study sought to explore the affective behavior changes that took place as a result of their summer experience.

Method

This study utilized an ethnographic research design to examine the culture of the middle school industrial arts classroom before, during, and after a summer youth development experience. It was an investigatory process designed to construct descriptions of total phenomena influencing students affective behavior.

Selection of Participants

Due to time and monetary restraints of the researchers and to facilitate the requirements of the design, a middle school located close enough for a daily commute by the researchers was necessary. The selection of the school was further delimited to industrial arts programs with active American Industrial Arts Student Association clubs with intentions to participate in the summer youth club experience. Finally, a school with an aggregate of students from low to middle socio-economic status

and with a racial mix representative of the geographic area was required. Such a school was selected in Knoxville, Tennessee that met the requirements of the design and restraints of the researchers.

Experience and Role of the Researchers

In an ethnographic study the researcher is the data collection instrument. Because of the importance of this role a discussion of the researchers is deemed necessary. The researchers for this study had a unique mix of experiences and training. Both were former industrial arts teachers with teaching certification and teacher education experience in the field. One had received recent training in the ethnographic research process and served to coordinate the design and data collection. The other had worked closely with the youth leadership program for several years and participated as an instructor full time in the summer youth program. The researchers employed a graduate assistant trained in ethnographic research to assist in the data collection.

Data Collection Strategies

Prior to the design of this ethnographic study several attempts by the researchers had been made to collect data documenting the effects of summer youth leadership camps. Contemporary survey instruments reviewed did not measure the attitudinal changes expected by the researchers. It was reasoned that classroom and laboratory activities and camp leadership training of participants must be observed in depth to establish

the baseline data and to measure changes that may occur. For these reasons it was decided that the researchers would observe participants in the classrooms and laboratories with as much frequency as time and money would allow.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were gathered prior to the summer experience in the industrial arts classroom/laboratory. Regular attendance in the classroom by the researchers was required to enable the researchers to achieve the confidence of both teacher and students. Several observations of salient behavior were made with particular attention to five previously determined factors of job success. These factors were: Ambition; Self-Control; Organization; Enthusiasm; and Conscientiousness (Brauchle, Petty, and Morgan, 1983). This pre summer period allowed for the collection of baseline data. Three students were singled out for observation during this period.

During the one week summer leadership camp, the researchers participated in the activities with the participants. The previously identified students were known only to the researchers and were observed as they interacted within the culture of the camp and the camp dynamics.

The post camp observations were collected in the classroom/laboratory from interactions with the teacher and other students. Notations of expected and unexpected behavioral changes were made and recorded.

Interpretation of Findings

Changes in behavior did occur. However, the time frame was nine months and one grade in school greater. The researchers also found many dynamics effecting the behavior of the students other than the summer camp experience. The summer camp, on the other hand may have precipitate some of these "other dynamics" that appeared to occur.

We expect as teachers, for the summer leadership camp to serve as a training center for leaders. One thing we may not expect is the effect of expected outcomes. In other words, we expect people trained as leaders to act as leaders. As teachers we tend to give leadership roles to those trained in leadership, whether or not they are leaders. While this may be fine and good experience to our students, it confounds specific characterization of the summer leadership camp experience.

Baseline Data.

To more fully explain the findings a discussion of the classroom/laboratory is appropriate. Baseline data revealed three groups of students. The first are the super stars, the "wrens". These students are involved in the youth club and work closely with the teacher. At the other end of the spectrum are the special education and problem students, the "buzzards". These students circle all day, make a lot of noise, and get a lot of attention but do not accomplish very much. In the middle are the phantoms, students that are almost non existent. These students could be called the "bluebirds".

An interesting observation is that the youth club members did not segregate to themselves but moved among the other two groups. They seemed to have friends from all levels in the class. However, the teacher did give the club members more responsibility such as helping some of the special education students with their projects.

The leaders, youth club members, in the industrial arts class did not exhibit leadership characteristics in other classes. They were involved in projects and activities in other classes but did not "stick out" as leaders as they did in the industrial arts classes.

Summer Youth Camp.

The students from the participant school blended in well with students from other schools at the summer camp. Their behavior was average when compared with others during the one week experience. The summer camp was a mix of sports activities, including basketball, canoeing, volleyball etc. and classroom training in leadership and group activities such as skits and extemporaneous speaking.

Post Camp Data.

After the camp experience the students exhibited more independence in the classroom/laboratory. They have been given more responsibility by the teacher. More importantly, they are assuming more responsibility and are making decisions about proper use of class time on projects and activities.

It is interesting to observe these students assuming

leadership roles without direction. The teacher facilitates this behavior by giving these students freedom and leeway with their responsibilities.

Students who participated in the summer youth camp require much less direction and discipline in the classroom/laboratory. They present little problem to the teacher with regards to class/lab projects and assume, without direction, the responsibility of helping other students who are having problems with assigned tasks.

These same students are now coming to the class/lab in their free time and during lunch to work on skits and projects. They are approaching these activities with enthusiasm and they are demonstrating an ambition not observed before the summer camp.

Evidence of classroom/laboratory activities reveal more organization than was exhibited previously. And self-control is manifested in their use of time more wisely. There is no question that an increase in their conscientiousness has been observed.

Summary.

It was the expectations of the researchers that the summer youth camp experience would assist in their leadership skills. The results of this observation are obscured by the confounding factors of teacher expectations. Therefore this finding cannot be verified without further study.

However, a close look at the five factors reported to lead to job success reveals significant increases in these

characteristics. These characteristics were: Ambition; Self-Control; Organization; Enthusiasm; and Conscientiousness. Certainly these competencies were improved. And the improvement was probably due to the Summer Youth Camp experience.

Unfortunately this report does not allow for the in-depth discussion of the findings and the probable causes that will be required for a complete ethnographic study of the culture of the summer youth camp and the industrial arts classroom/laboratory. These findings as reported in this study are preliminary and must be followed by further investigation and data collection. Such a follow up and replication of this study is recommended by these researchers to verify the findings of this study.

Regardless of the possible weakness of educational research to answer real questions of the value and worth of educational experiences, this study certainly has demonstrated that a summer youth camp can lead to improved enthusiasm and ambition of the participants. Their self-control and organization skills can be improved and they can achieve a heighten conscientiousness toward their work and others.